

State of New Hampshire

JOHN J. BARTHELMES
COMMISSIONER OF SAFETY



EARL M. SWEENEY
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY NEWS ADVISORY

Tuesday, January 15, 2008

Contact: Jim Van Dongen
603-271-2231

To New Hampshire editors, news directors and producers:

Effective February 1, 2008, the N.H. Department of Safety will no longer issue media identification cards, also known as press passes.

The Department has issued such identification for several decades as a convenience to the state's news organizations. However, recent changes in technology and the structure of the news media have greatly expanded the definition of who is considered a "journalist" far beyond the employees of traditional news organizations.

The Department has seen a significant increase in the number of requests for media passes due to the emergence of alternative forms of media. Either we must issue such ID to virtually anyone who asks for it or be placed in the position of deciding who is or is not a legitimate journalist. That is not an appropriate role for a state agency.

News organizations should issue ID cards for their own employees to replace state-issued identification.

Please contact me if you have any questions.